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Beethoven : a pioneer in the use of the piano pedals

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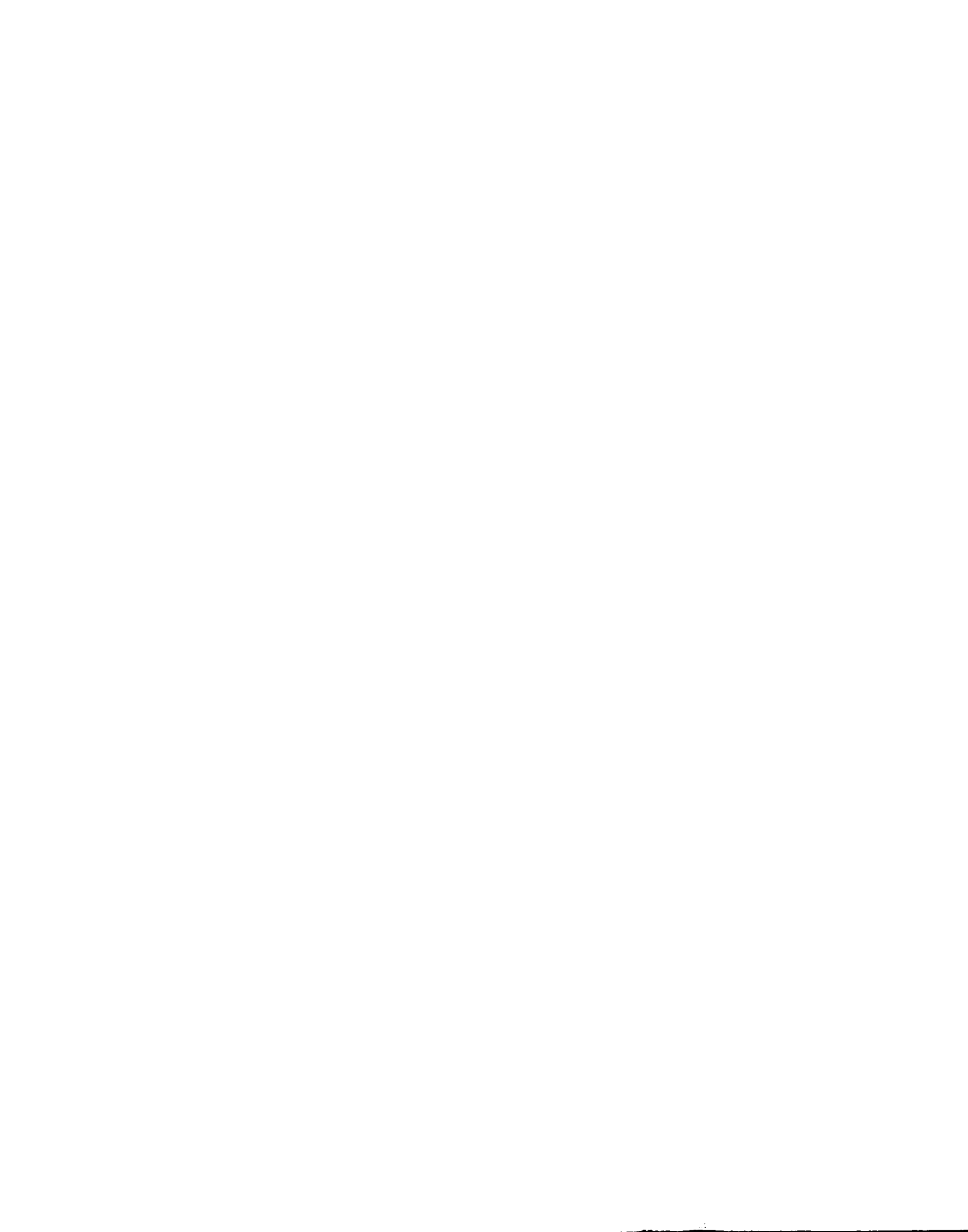
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BEETHOVEN: A PIONEER IN THE USE OF THE PIANO PEDALS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Music and Dance

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Inna Gendler

December 1998

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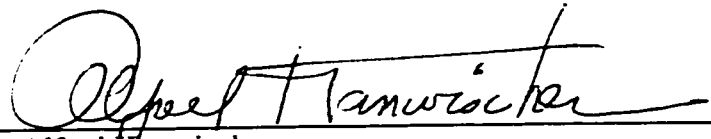
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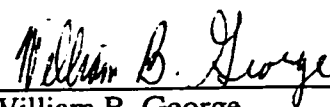
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ABSTRACT

BEETHOVEN: A PIONEER IN THE USE OF THE PIANO PEDALS

by Inna Gendler

This paper covers aspects of long pedaling marks written by Ludwig van Beethoven in several works, including a description of the pianos that were used during the time the works were composed. Information about the pianos used by Beethoven provides a better understanding of some of their limitations and, perhaps, some of their advantages. Another goal of this paper is to examine the diversity among the existing editions of specific pieces in order to discover the similarities and differences in the writing of pedal marks. Examining these editions was the last and most challenging task since the material for some of the sonatas is missing, and some of the editions were not available.

This topic was chosen primarily, because I knew very little about Beethoven's use of long pedals. Secondly, this research will be helpful in my professional career as a piano teacher. Finally, and very importantly, the topic was both challenging and exciting. The editions chosen for this project are autographs, first editions, the Schnabel edition, and the Henle Urtext.

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I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Alfred Kanwischer, my first American piano teacher and advisor, for his guidance and support.

I am also indebted to the two readers: Dr. Laurel Brettell and Dr. William George, my graduate advisor, who provided me with helpful comments.

I'd like to thank my parents, Gregory and Zinaida Gendler, for providing me support over all years of my Graduate Studies. Also, my thanks to my husband, Steve Reinhard, for his comments and support.

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CHAPTER 1

THE EVOLUTION OF PIANO PEDALS

Historical Perspective

Even though the harpsichord and the clavichord were the main instruments used in the eighteenth century, the piano began to establish its role during this time. The piano was invented in 1709 by Bartolomeo Cristofori, the keeper of the clavecin collection in the court of Ferdinando de Medici. A major aspect of the pianoforte evolution was the development of damper mechanisms which allowed all strings to continue to sound, without a reference to a single set of depressed keys. This proved to be a crucial advantage of the piano to the late Classical and Romantic composers. The dampers on the early pianos were controlled by hand stops. As these were too cumbersome, they were replaced with knee levers on pianos that were made in Germany around 1765.¹ Initially, the damper activation was selectively divided into treble and bass groups, and this approach remained in use until 1820.² A further refinement was achieved in 1777 by Adam Beyer in London, who incorporated the pedal with a cleft foot, which controlled the treble and bass damper grouping.³ Other improvements in the foot pedal mechanisms were subsequently incorporated in 1783 by John Broadwood in London and the Erard brothers in Paris. The foot pedal was adapted by Johann Stein in Augsburg in 1789, twelve years after Mozart's letter to his father about the knee lever mechanism on the Stein.⁴ However, split pedals based on Beyer's original concept, with some variation, continued to be built until around

¹ Joseph Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 2.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

1830 when they were replaced with the single damper pedal, which has been in use ever since.

Pedals Of The Early Fortepiano

English manufacturers started building pianos with pedals toward the end of the eighteenth century (1770). There were two pedals: damper-raising (on the right side) and *una corda* (on the left). Viennese pianos mostly had knee-levers. As a result, the scores that were written before 1800 do not have many pedal markings.

The Damper Pedal

Damper pedal or damper raising pedal began to be in use in the late eighteenth century. In Beethoven's time, the pedal was operated by a knee; however, other methods were incorporated, too. Among those were hand stops and the right foot. The damper pedal was used for at least two reasons. First, to overcome pianistic problems such as disability of the hand to reach broken chords, and second, for color.

Mozart owned a piano with a damper pedal. Proof of this is found in his letter to his father, Leopold Mozart, written in 1777:

I have played all my six sonatas by heart quite often, here as well as in Munich; the last one in D comes out incomparably on Stein's pianoforte. The machine which you press with the knee is likewise better made on his instruments than on the others; I need scarcely touch it and it works, and as soon as I take away the knee the least bit, you don't hear the slightest aftersound.⁵

Mozart was referring to the lever on the underside of the keyboard that was activated

⁵ Artur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), pp.100-1.

with his knee and was used to raise the dampers from the strings *en masse*, rather than individually as actuated by the fingers hitting respective keys.

The *Una Corda* Pedal

As the early pianos were being developed, two methods were used to help in the changes of tone quality. The earliest was the *pianozug*, or *feu celeste*, which consisted of a thin strip of leather or felt inserted between hammers and strings. This resulted in a muted sound with a gentle, sweet quality. The second approach, closely related in concept to today's *una corda* pedal, was the *Verschiebung* [the shifting]. This mechanism shifted the keyboard and the hammers to the right in order for each hammer to strike only one string, instead of the normal mode in which two or three would be struck. This device was introduced by Cristofori in 1726 and soon, thereafter, was adopted as standard equipment by other piano builders. When using eighteenth and early nineteenth century pianos, the performer was able to shift from the normal three (*tre corde*) position to an interim position in which two strings (*due corde*) could be struck, or to complete shift which allowed only one string (*una corda*) to be struck. The extent of the shift was controlled by the depth to which the pedal was pressed. While this final refinement is not available on modern pianos, it was quite popular and readily available during Beethoven's lifetime. He used variable shifting features in several of his piano works by utilizing specific distinctions on his notation. These were *una corda*, *due corda*, and *tre corda*. Examples of such works are the second movement of Concerto No. 4, Opus 58 and the third movement of the Sonata, Opus 106 (see figures 1 and 2). Thereafter, such marks were not seen until his last three piano sonatas.



Figure 1. Piano Concerto No. 4, Opus 58 (mm. 58-62), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁶



Figure 2. Piano Sonata, Opus 106 (mm. 58-60), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁷

Other Pedals of the Early Piano

A multitude of pedal-type devices for modifying sound appeared and disappeared in the early stages of the development of the piano during the late eighteenth century. Most of these devices were intended to imitate other instruments, and in some cases, threatened to turn the piano into a vulgar musical toy. The innovative devices of that period were: the bassoon pedal, which utilized a roll of paper and silk over the bass and produced a buzzing noise intended to simulate the sound of a bassoon; the cembalo stop, which pressed a

⁶ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klavierkonzerte* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1996), Vol. 2, 1996, p. 50.

⁷ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Grosse Sonate für das Hammer-Klavier* (Vienna: Artaria, 1819), p. 28.

leather weight against the strings and thus created a sound resembling that of a harpsichord; the crescendo and decrescendo pedal, which mechanically raised and lowered the lid on the piano or opened and closed side doors of the case to amplify or suppress the magnitude of the sound in a manner similar to that used on an organ; and finally, perhaps, the most bizarre device of all, one that blew air across the strings in an attempt to magnify the tone after the hammer had struck. When these and other similar devices disappeared from the scene, the development of the piano approached its modern status. The only surviving pedals are the three basic pedals currently in use [damper, *sostenuto*, and *una corda*].⁸

Early Attempts of Using the Pedal

Many composers before Beethoven were attracted to the blurring sound created by the piano's foot pedals. According to Joseph Banowetz, one such composer was Emanuel Bach who wrote in 1762 that the "undamped register of the fortepiano is the most pleasing sound and ... the most delightful for improvising."⁹ Clementi also used an open pedal (long pedaling) in his Sonata Opus 37/I/I in the closing theme in the exposition and recapitulation. Haydn made a few isolated requests for use of the right pedal in his Sonata Hob. XVI: 50 that was written around 1794.¹⁰ The composer was using the pedal for coloristic effects that created unusually blurry sounds that were not known before.



Example 1. Piano Sonata Hob. XVI: 50 (mm. 72-73), by Franz Joseph Haydn.¹¹

⁸ Joseph Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling*, pp. 5-6.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

¹¹ Original example.

Mozart wrote his father about his admiration of the damper knee levers on the Stein piano and may have used them himself although, as far as we know, he never specified their use in his keyboard works. Newman writes, "But with Beethoven it was different. He left little doubt as to the extent, the nature, or practical application of his pedal uses."¹² Beethoven introduced the phrases, "*senza sordino*" and "*con sordino*," [with raised dampers = with pedal, and with dampers lowered respectively] in his Concerto no. 3 in C minor. *Senza sordino* had been used earlier by Milchmeyer and was written as *ohne mit Dampfer* in German. Beethoven used the Italian version of this term, *senza sordino*, in op. 31, no. 2 and op. 37. Interestingly, Beethoven did not use German terms for pedaling in any of his works. Also, the Italian marks were kept in the Bagatelles Opus 33, the Variations Opus 34, and the Variations Opus 35. Later, Beethoven started using the terms "Ped." and "O." However, his reason for doing this is unclear. There is a fascinating body of pedal marks in the works of Beethoven. The reasons for many of them remain controversial, perhaps even mysterious. But they are the very marks that should be honored in spirit, not altered or edited away.

¹² William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1988), p. 142.

CHAPTER 2

THE PIANOS OF BEETHOVEN AND PEDAL USE

Beethoven performed on many pianos including: 1) the Walter (according to Mozart, the instrument had excellent tone and was one of the most preferred pianos by Mozart and Beethoven during these times); (2) the Stein; and (3) the Streicher.¹³ In addition, there were three other makes of pianos that were even more important in his life. These were the Erard, Broadwood, and the Graf. The early instruments that Beethoven owned were almost all Viennese and were similar in construction and design to the Broadwood of the same date.¹⁴ In particular, Beethoven liked Streicher's pianos. He wrote Streicher a very complimentary letter:

...There is no doubt that so far as the manner of playing is concerned, the pianoforte is still the least studied and developed of all instruments; often, one thinks that one is merely listening to a harp. And I am delighted, my dear fellow, that you are one of the few who realize and perceive that, provided one can feel music, one can also make the pianoforte sing. I hope the time will come when harp and the pianoforte will be treated as two entirely different instruments....¹⁵

Three items in this letter are of great importance:

1. Beethoven wanted the piano to sing (the new *cantabile* sound);

¹³ Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune, eds., *The Beethoven Reader* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1971), p. 43.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

2. He wanted a different, warmer sound for the new pianos. In fact, all his life, Beethoven sought a stronger (fuller), more sonorous sound from pianos;

3. Beethoven implied that legato was important. Viennese pianos had an *una corda* pedal, but it could not shift to one string. However, English instruments were more developed. They had a muting device that was located between the strings and hammers which was an addition to the *una corda* pedal. The muting device was controlled by a hand-stop mechanism.

A. J. Hipkins who is an expert in Broadwood pianos, describes the device:

The dampers (*Sordini*), collectively divided into two halves, bass and treble, were taken off by hand-stops placed within the case of the instrument; another stop brought a long strip of leather [or, later on, felt] called a "sourdine" (*Sordino*), into contact with the strings to produce a *pizzicato*.¹⁶

The Erard

The Erard (now in Vienna) was a gift from Sebastian Erard in 1803 in recognition of Beethoven's fame.¹⁷ Sebastian Erard who was the first to use a band of felt for the soft pedal, was the inventor of the modern piano. It was the first instrument that had foot pedals instead of knee-levers; moreover, it was the first instrument that had a true *una corda* (action-shift so that the hammer would strike only one string) and *Sordino*. Erard adopted the damper pedal invented by John Broadwood in 1783.¹⁸ Prior to this, the split damper pedal was used. The Erard piano had four pedals: a lute-stop (an imitation of harpsichord effects), a damper (as today), a dampening pedal (which worked with an inserted cloth),

¹⁶ Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune, eds., *The Beethoven Reader*, p. 50.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁸ Banowetz, p. 2.

and an action-shifting pedal (as on today's grand).¹⁹ At first, Beethoven was pleased with the instrument and seemed enthusiastic about it. Perhaps proof of this is best demonstrated in the piano music he began writing during this time -- the "Waldstein" Sonata, Opus 53, which was followed by Opp. 54 and 57 (see figures 3 and 4).



Figure 3. Piano Sonata, Opus 54 (mm. 1-5), by Ludwig van Beethoven.²⁰

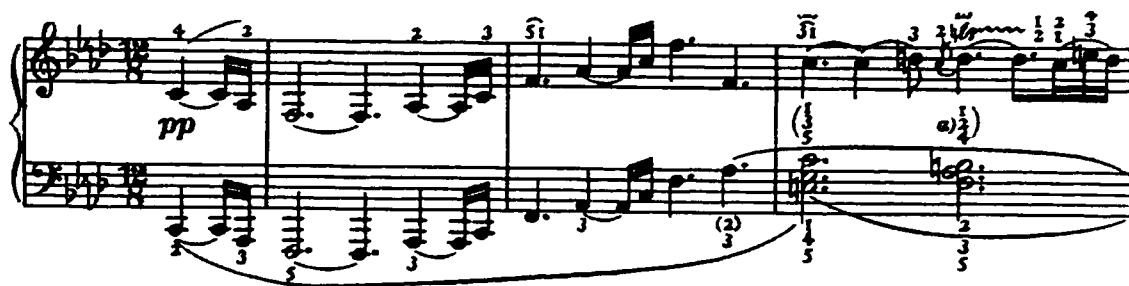


Figure 4. Piano Sonata, Opus 57 (mm. 1-3), by Ludwig van Beethoven.²¹

In these works, there is a new emphasis on virtuoso writing: large chords, chromatic scales, trills, and even new pedal effects. But, apparently, the Erard did not hold up very well. Beethoven soon complained that it was out of condition. In 1825, Beethoven gave

¹⁹ William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1988), p. 66.

²⁰ Ludwig van Beethoven, *32 Sonatas For the Pianoforte*, Artur Schnabel, ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1935), Vol. 2, 1935, p. 517.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 535.

this instrument to his brother because he no longer liked the action. However, it is possible that he used the piano harshly in the course of his playing and composing. In fact, Beethoven never had a piano that remained in good playing condition for very long.

The Broadwood

The Broadwood, like the Erard, was a gift to Beethoven. John Broadwood designed the damper pedal in 1783 and received a patent for his invention in England. Beethoven received the Broadwood piano (now in Budapest) in the middle of 1818 and kept the instrument until the day he died.²² The instrument had two pedals: a left soft pedal for action-shifting from *tre* to *due corde* and *una corda* (from three to two to one string), and a right one for damper control.²³ This instrument had six octaves.²⁴ Beethoven probably liked this piano the best because of its heavy action and powerful tone that the Viennese instruments lacked. Surely, an additional factor in his affection for the Broadwood was his progressing deafness during these years.

The Graf

The Graf piano, a Viennese instrument (located in the museum in Bonn), was given to Beethoven by Konrad Graf and was designed especially to help Beethoven overcome his deafness.²⁵ The piano had three pedals: an action-shifting (soft) pedal, a dampening pedal (with the use of cloth), and a damper control. It also had more than six octaves. At Beethoven's request, the action was heavy, and it was this type of action that Beethoven requested all through his life. Even though the instrument had four strings, the tone was

²² Arnold and Fortune, p. 52.

²³ Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices In Classic Piano Music: Their Principals and Applications* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 44.

²⁴ Arnold and Fortune, p. 42.

²⁵ William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way*, p. 53.

poor, especially in the treble. The reason that the instrument had a softer sound was because "...the wire had to be thinner to avoid an increase in tension that the wooden frame would not stand."²⁶ Surely, the four strings were more durable and could be a reason why Graf gave the instrument to Beethoven in 1825. Unfortunately, Beethoven could not hear anymore, and much of his piano music was written by that time. Surprisingly, the pianos he owned after he became deaf were still used by him. Evidence for this is the heavy usage or abuse the pianos showed.

Beethoven's Use of Pedals

Remarkably, Beethoven became known at the end of the eighteenth century (1790) as a pianist rather than as a composer. Beethoven was a pioneer in using long pedaling, and throughout his life, the pedals remained a crucial component of his music. Also, he was the first great composer to specify the use of the pedals to any significant extent. For example, in "Für Elise," WoO 59, he did not indicate any slurring or dynamics; however, he did point out every detail of pedaling. Figure 5 is a sketch of "Für Elise" in Beethoven's own hand. Because the sketch is very hard to read, the opening of the first edition is shown in Figure 6 for clarity.

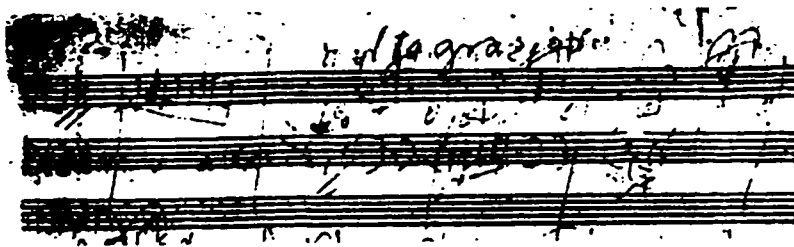


Figure 5. Facsimile of a sketch of WoO 59, *Für Elise* (mm. 1-4), by Ludwig van Beethoven²⁷.

²⁶ Arnold and Fortune, p. 46.

²⁷ Ludwig van Beethoven, reproduced in *Beethovens Handschrift* (Leipzig: Verlag Von Quelle & Meyer, 1926), tafel vii.



Figure 6. Facsimile first edition of, *Für Elise* (WoO 59, mm. 1-4), by Ludwig van Beethoven.²⁸

The signs “Ped.” and “0” (pedal release) used over several measures (long pedals) sometimes designate a deliberate blur, often comprising a whole series of harmonies in the service of a poetic idea. Many critics claimed that Beethoven's use of long pedaling was due to his deafness. In his book, David Rowland writes:

Hummel's partisans accused Beethoven of mistreating the piano, of lacking all cleanness and clarity, of creating nothing but confused noise the way he used the pedal.... Only ears accustomed to this, can applaud such an abuse; sensible men no doubt give their sanction to my opinion.²⁹

William S. Newman disagrees with this theory and writes, “I have concluded that he [Beethoven] did understand, hear, and want essentially the pedal effects that he indicated.”³⁰ The author also states:

I am convinced by both historical and musical circumstances that Beethoven deliberately cultivated the gently confused sounds in certain passages and that what he got is what he wanted, at least in terms of the instruments of his time.³¹

²⁸ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klavierstück in A Moll, no. 33* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1867), p. 1.

²⁹ David Rowland, *A History of Pianoforte Pedaling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 56.

³⁰ William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way*, p. 253.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

In addition to that thought, William S. Newman states that Beethoven was using the pedal to create a fuller, stronger sound.³² A whole new orchestral style for the piano!

According to Sandra Rosenblum, Beethoven used the pedal to confirm the structure:

Beethoven used pedal to highlight or relate to form in more ways than did his contemporaries. His effects include enhancing a pivotal point, bridging, coloring an important section or theme, signaling the return of a theme or a section, and incorporating pedaling as an element of structure.³³

Alfred Brendel states, “Beethoven notates the pedal only when he wishes to obviate misunderstandings, or when aiming at unusual effects.”³⁴

To review, then, the pedals most used by Beethoven were:

1. Damper raising (with two separate controls for treble and bass) or a split-damper pedal. However, there is not a single indication of a split pedal mark in any of Beethoven’s music;
2. Action-shifting (which allowed the hammers to shift and to strike one or two strings instead of three);
3. Dampening (a piece of material or leather was put in between the hammers and the strings).³⁵

³² Ibid., p. 240.

³³ Rosenblum, p. 127.

³⁴ Alfred Brendel, *Musical Thoughts and Afterthoughts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 34.

³⁵ William S. Newman, *Beethoven On Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way*, p. 65.

Despite the fact that three different pedals were available, Beethoven wrote directions for only two: dampers raising and action-shifting. According to William S. Newman, Beethoven used the damper pedal more than we previously thought.³⁶

The reasons why Beethoven employed the damper pedal were: (1) thematic, (2) coloristic, and (3) structural.³⁷ Beethoven used the pedal for aiding in thematic legato, highlighting or relating to form, for pivotal points, for coloration of an important location or section, for stressing the return of a theme, and for use as an element of structure.

William S. Newman suggests seven uses of the pedal by Beethoven:

1. Sustaining the bass;
2. Improving the legato (legato that would help to sustain the notes. It is thought that syncopated pedal was not yet used at that time);
3. Creating a collective or composite sound (very important to Beethoven);
4. Implementing dynamic contrasts;
5. Interconnecting sections or movements;
6. Blurring the sound through harmonic clashes. (Beethoven was known for not changing pedal on harmonies I-V. Impressionism!);
7. Contributing to the thematic structure.³⁸

Two circumstances are credited with causing Beethoven to pioneer the use of the pedal: (1) the advances in piano pedal development, providing the capability for wide utilization thereof just after 1800; and (2) the desire of Beethoven to express himself in new ways, emotionally and psychologically. Regarding a time frame for Beethoven's use of the

³⁶ Ibid., p. 35.

³⁷ Rosenblum, pp. 121-130.

³⁸ William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way*, p. 236.

pedal, he probably used damper controls in playing in the mid 1780's but did not start indicating their use in his manuscripts until 1795 (first two Piano Concertos, Opp. 19 and 15). He continued using them until his last year of composing, 1826, one year before his death.³⁹

Sandra Rosenblum suggests that, in the Classical Era, the damper pedal or knee lever was used for many reasons:

1. *Harmony* Treated independently; however, some composer would indicate special treatment where it had to be followed (mostly after 1800);
2. *Rhythm* Used mostly for slow movement and melodic pieces;
3. *Texture* Used for homophonic texture. Also, the bass notes were commonly held;
4. *Articulation* Used for legato with fingers. For the most part, no pedal was held on the rests unless indicated by the composer;
5. *Dynamics* Used to increase the sound; however, it was commonly used for soft passages;
6. *Melody* Used to help emphasize the more important notes;
7. *Range* Used in high registers, giving them more support. More pedal was used for high register than for low.⁴⁰

Today the most common techniques of pedaling are:

1. Rhythmic pedaling (while a chord is played, dampers are raised and put back with the attack) [sometimes called the "pedal stomp"]. In Classical performance,

³⁹ Banowetz, pp. 143-4.

⁴⁰ Rosenblum, p. 113.

rhythmic pedaling had two significant functions: helping to improve metrical structure and articulation. Mostly, this type of pedal was used for rhythmical dances such as Marches and Waltzes. Rhythmic pedaling does not help to improve legato (smooth voicing). However, in terms of the Classical performance, legato was not a necessary technique.

2. Syncopated or legato pedaling (the pedal is depressed immediately after the attack, and released as a new harmony is played, and then redepressed).

Syncopated pedaling, was used to improve legato playing. Since the pianos of the Classical Era were not fully developed, the syncopated pedal was not used much. Pianos of the early 1800's could not sustain the note more than one measure, so the damper pedal was an alternative to prolong the sound for several measures.

As pianos and piano pedals were in constant development during yearly eighteenth century, many composers as well as performers, tried new effects on new instruments. The old school did not agree with new ideas since the blurry sound of the pedal was not familiar to them. However, this did not stop the process of exploration of the piano's resources. According to many critics, the pedals were used to overcome some difficulties in playing and to create a new sound. Ludwig van Beethoven was the first composer who gave practical life to the new device called pedal.

CHAPTER 3

ABOUT THE EDITIONS

In my early training as a pianist, my teachers were more concerned with interpreting Beethoven's scores based on the romantic tradition than what could be found in original sources. Artur Schnabel's edition was viewed as the definitive guide to the performance of Beethoven's works during those years. The original sources were not consulted or even mentioned by my teachers at this time. Alas, I never questioned the authority of my previous teachers and believed the edition was the ultimate source. Interestingly, only during my research did I find out the amazing diversity of the various editions. The differences between the several editions and autographs of Beethoven's piano music were overwhelming. I decided to take at least three to four sources that would be helpful to me: the autograph (when it was available), first edition (when it was available), Schnabel's edition, and Henle Urtext.

Autographs

Unfortunately, only a few original autographs have survived. The final autograph, of course, is the most authentic version of Beethoven's work and may be our best hope in helping us to discover his real intentions. According to Ries, one of Beethoven's most famous students: "Beethoven attached no importance to his autograph compositions. In most cases, once they had been engraved, they lay about in an adjoining room or in the middle of his work-room scattered over the floor among other music."⁴¹ Most of the surviving materials are sketches. For example, according to William S. Newman, from

⁴¹ O.G. Sonneck, *Beethoven: Impressions by His Contemporaries* (New York: Schirmer, 1926; reprint New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), p. 57.

Opus 22, thirteen autographs have survived and thirteen works are lost.⁴² After checking the works, I found that almost fifty percent of the autographs are missing. In some of Beethoven's works, the autograph gives very few clues of his real intention. For example, the autographs of the Piano Concertos in B-flat major and C minor were not completed by Beethoven. Only when the work was in preparation for publication did he write complete parts for the solo piano. In this particular case, the first edition is more accurate and more helpful for the performer than the autograph.

The First Edition

The first edition was printed during Beethoven's lifetime and was published with minor corrections made by him. Some changes were made on the title page. If a new edition was made, it usually involved new engraving. To my knowledge, two to ten early editions of Beethoven's piano works are available and it is important to know which ones were done under his supervision. Unfortunately, publishers at that time did not leave any information regarding whether or not the corrections were those of the composer. Most of Beethoven's early editions are in Beethoven's Archive in Bonn. However, the Ira Brilliant Center for Beethoven's Studies, at San Jose State University, has an imposing collection of first editions, plus many photographs of original manuscripts and sketches.

Schnabel Edition

Artur Schnabel's edition appeared in 1935 when Schnabel was 53 years old. He was an Austrian pianist who was considered to be the greatest living authority on performing Beethoven's piano sonatas by many musicians and scholars. He was born in a small town named Lipnik that was located on the Moravian-Silesian border. As did many

⁴² William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven: Playing His Music His Way*, p. 33.

families at the turn of the century, his family moved to Vienna. When he was six, Artur attracted much attention as a child prodigy, and, by the age of nine, most of the musical circles of Vienna knew about him as a young, musically gifted boy. At a young age, Schnabel performed his own compositions. An example of an early composition is his Piano Concerto. The performance of this piece brought Schnabel fame and popularity in Germany; therefore, Schnabel decided to remain in Berlin in the early 1900s. From that time on, he was considered a German artist. Most of Schnabel's programs consisted of music by Mozart and Beethoven. As an adult, Schnabel seldom performed works of Chopin. In addition to his busy schedule as a performer, Artur Schnabel was also a teacher. Among his students were Willy Bardas, Paul Goldschmidt, Edith Kraus, and Leonore Speyer.

Rudolph Kastner describes Schnabel's performances of Beethoven's Sonatas as those of a "modern artist who has tested and experienced all the most recent developments of styles and tendencies mastered them and bent them to the expression of his own personality."⁴³ In 1927 Schnabel performed all 32 piano sonatas of Ludwig van Beethoven in seven recitals. He was the first artist to record all 32 piano sonatas (1931-35). These recordings have never been out of print.

Henle Urtext

This year, 1998, Henle Urtext edition celebrates its fiftieth birthday. Henle is a German firm of music publishers that was founded in Munich in 1948 by Günter Henle. Even though this edition is relatively young, it has established a reputation for excellence in the musical world. The Urtext edition is considered one of the most authentic sources at the present time. This critical edition is based on the autographs and early editions. Urtext

⁴³ Rudolf Kastner, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas* (London: The New Temple Press, n. d.), p. 45.

does not leave out any original details that were noted by the composer, and discusses variants in notes. The firm works very closely with Beethovenhaus in Bonn.

CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS OF LONG PEDALING IN THE WORKS OF BEETHOVEN

The following examples are some illustrations of Beethoven's long pedaling. Because of the brevity of this paper, I will restrict my discussion to the more dramatic instances.

SONATA, Opus 53 (Waldstein)

This sonata was composed during a relatively happy time in Beethoven's life and was published in 1805. He wrote to his student Ries:

For the life of me I should never have thought that I could be so lazy as I am here. If an outbreak of really hard work is going to follow, then indeed something fine may be the result.⁴⁴

The Sonata was dedicated to Count Waldstein, who was Beethoven's patron and a good friend in Bonn. Even though it is mostly known by the name "Waldstein", in France and in Russia it is known as *L'aurore* [Dawn]. The name "...being another subject of nineteenth-century programmatic interpretations."⁴⁵

The research examines the long pedaling of the Rondo theme of the second movement. The pedal should be held in bars 1 through 12 blurring the harmony I-V and making partial changes in bars 8, 12 and 23. Beethoven indicates at this point that the low bass should be sustained while the tonic-dominant progression is sounded. The tones come from both sides of middle C; therefore, a split damper pedal would work in this

⁴⁴ John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), p. 185.

⁴⁵ William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Classic Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), p. 521.

portion. Also, the pedal here is motivic, beginning always with one particular, recurring pitch.

RONDO
Allarghetto moderato (♩=circa.112)
leggierissimo, ma ben legato.

The image shows a musical score for the Rondo section of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Opus 53, measures 1-8. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of two systems of piano and bass staves. The first system includes the instruction "sempre pinnissimo" and a "pp" dynamic marking. The second system includes a "pp" dynamic marking. The music features a recurring bass note in the left hand and a melodic line in the right hand.

Figure 7. Piano Sonata, Opus 53, Rondo (mm. 1-8), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁴⁶

Schnabel suggests that in bars 1-4 “to change the pedal in the third and fourth bars would destroy the very apparent invention of always letting the fundamental note (bass) sound until the next fundamental note follows.”⁴⁷

Since the “C” is the first note of the theme, the bass note must be sustained every time it is played. Prolongation of the bass by using the damper pedal helps to create different effects that range from “simple to structurally significant.”⁴⁸ Beethoven contrasted fortissimo sound on the pedal over sustained bass notes with piano unpedaled sound. This was also done by the composer in the Fourth Concerto. As I mentioned

⁴⁶ Ludwig van Beethoven, *32 Sonaty dlia Fortepiano*, Artur Schnabel, ed. (Moskva: Muzika, 1983), Vol. 2, 1983, p. 215.

⁴⁷ Banowetz, p. 173.

⁴⁸ Rosenblum, p. 122.

earlier, it was in the Fourth Concerto that Beethoven first indicated *una corda* (action-shifting pedal) where the soft pedal would be held for the entire Andante theme.

Different solutions could be incorporated in order to preserve the original thought:

1. hold the pedal as written in the original score;
2. make partial changes of pedal with each harmony change;
3. use the *sostenuto* pedal plus the damper.

Also, in measures 278-283, Beethoven crossed out release signs that were originally placed there. They were located at the penultimate sixteenth note. He made new indications later that go with the bar line after the last note. Most pianists play a syncopated pedal there. However, Beethoven indicated pedal usage through the rests in measures 98-113.



Figure 8. Piano Sonata, Opus 53 (mm. 98-113), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Complete Piano Sonatas* (Milano: Edizioni Cursi, 1949), Vol. 2, 1949, p. 95.

The first edition shows the first release on the second beat on the first note “C” (m. 8) and a depression again in the next measure with the bass “B” (m. 9). The same pattern appears until the end of the theme.

Schnabel’s edition follows the ideas of the first edition almost exactly and states in the footnotes that a change of the pedal in the third and fourth measures would destroy the original intent of the composer, that is, the desire for a blurry, dreamy, moody sound. Nevertheless, he indicates lifting the pedal in measure 23 after taking the tone of the melody “G” and even writes the tenuto sign.



Figure 9. Piano Sonata, Opus 53 (mm. 24-25), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁵⁰

In my opinion, Artur Schnabel viewed it as a prolongation for the next measure, almost as a pedal point. The first edition has an entirely different notation of the passage. There is an indication of a release before the final “G” in the right hand. Perhaps, Beethoven’s intention was to include this note to the next passage. The Henle Urtext has the same idea and places a release on the “G”; however, there is no indication of a *tenuto* sign. Therefore, it is closer to how it is supposed to sound.

⁵⁰ Ludwig van Beethoven, *32 Sonatij dlia Fortepiano*, Artur Schnabel, ed. (Moskva: Muzika, 1983), Vol. 2, 1983, p. 215.

Piano Concerto #3, Opus 37 (C Minor)

The Concerto was composed in 1800 and was published four years later in 1804 as Opus 37. The masterpiece was composed while Beethoven was still using the knee-lever. When Beethoven received the Erard, his markings of the pedal changed to "Ped." for pressing the pedal and "O" for release. Probably, Beethoven's intentions were to use Sourdino in the Concerto, in order to produce a unique sound. According to Czerny, Beethoven (who played the concerto publicly in 1803) depressed the pedal throughout the whole opening theme of the second movement, which worked very well on the muted [*una corda*] pedal, used at the same time. Arnold does not support this idea. He believes that Beethoven made some quick changes that were not noticed and says that the composer would never tolerate dissonances.⁵¹ But now, with a much stronger tone [on the newer pianos], we must advise that the damper pedal must be noticed and "the whole theme must sound like a distant, holy, unearthly harmony."⁵²

Ernest Hutcheson gives his view:

It is to be told by Czerny that Beethoven, when playing the C minor Concerto at a concert in 1803, held the pedal throughout the entire theme of the slow movement... But Beethoven's own directions call for several changes of pedal, shifting from *senza sordini* (with pedal) to *con sordini* (without pedal) and back no fewer than eight times so the story is at least partly discredited. Quite probably Beethoven, an accomplished pianist, had already acquired modern refinement of shaking out dissonances by a rapid imperceptible movement of the foot not amounting to a full release of the pedal; this might easily have escaped the eye and ear of an observer.⁵³

⁵¹ Denis Arnold and Nigel Fortune, p. 51.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁵³ Victor Wolfram, *The Sostenuuto Pedal* (Oklahoma: Oklahoma University Publications, 1965) p. 14.

Kenneth Drake gives a quote from Carl Czerny about Beethoven's playing of the slow movement of the Third Piano Concerto:

[Beethoven] permitted the pedal to continue through the complete theme, which went very well on the weak sounding pianos of the time, especially if the *Verschiebung* was used also. But now that the tone has become much stronger, we would recommend that damper pedal is taken anew with each more important change of harmony; however, a manner that no break in the sound is noticeable.⁵⁴

In the introduction of the solo piano, there are several indications of *senza* and *con sordini*, and many of them are puzzling. For example, in measure six, *senza sordino* is still present; the pedal would be released on the last sixteenth note "D." According to Henle, the release must be done at the end of the fifth measure and the rolling of the chords must sound without the pedal. I prefer to use the first edition. The tempo is *Largo*, which allows the sound to be very romantic and eliminates the dryness of the chords.

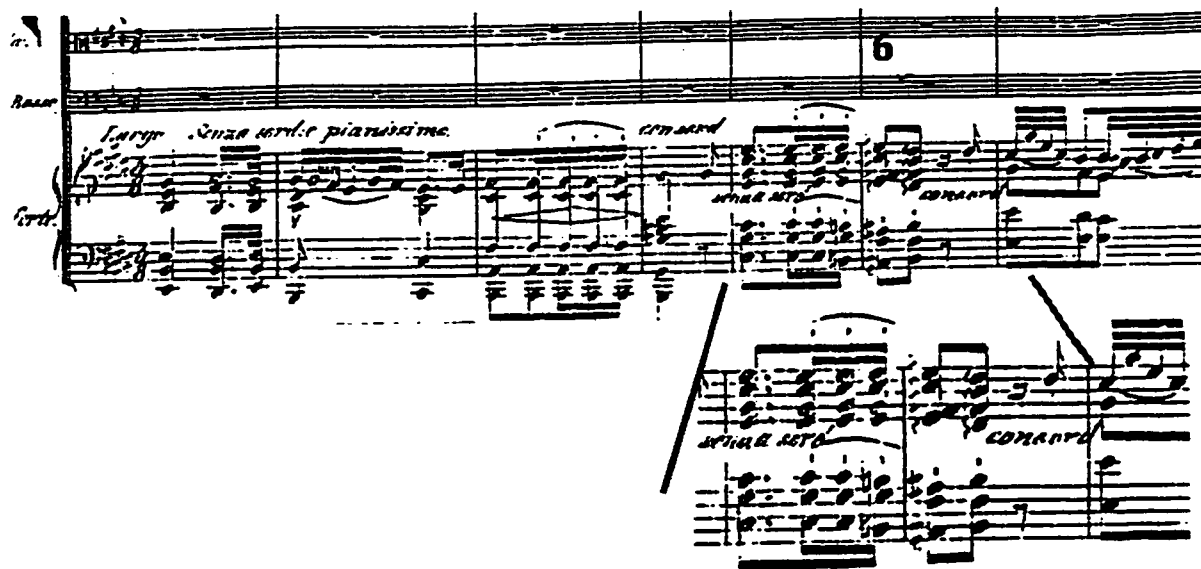


Figure 10. Facsimile of the first edition of the Piano Concerto No. 3 Opus 37, 2nd movement (mm. 1-6), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Kenneth Drake, *The Beethoven's Sonatas and the Creative Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 34.

⁵⁵ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Concerto, No. 3*, op. 37 (Frankfort: Dunst, 1837 or 1835?), p. 7.

SONATA, Opus 27, no. 2 (Moonlight)

The Sonata in C# minor. It's the only one.

Alfred Brendel

Beethoven never called this sonata "Moonlight." However, he did give this sonata the descriptive title "Sonata quasi una Fantasia." During Beethoven's time, it was called the Laube (Arbour). The name "Moonlight," as it is commonly titled today, was given by the poet Rellstab while visiting Lake Lucerne and observing a peaceful night there. Edwin Fisher's version of the background of the sonata is that the opening theme of the sonata is connected to Mozart's Don Giovanni. He compares the passage of the opera (assassination of the Commendatore by Don Giovanni), and states that it was just transposed to the C# minor key. Beethoven indicated at the head of the opening movement, "Si deve suonare tutto questo, pezzo delicatissimamente e senza sordino" (This whole piece ought to be played with the utmost delicacy and without damper[s].) In addition, he added "*sempre piannissimo e senza sordino*" between the staves (always pianissimo and without dampers). At this time, the knee lever was still being used. During Liszt's performance of the piece, Berlioz, who was present at the concert, said that "the left hand spreads solemn and sad, whose duration permits the piano vibrations gradually to die away into one another."⁵⁶

In the original score, the knee-pedal was supposed to be held for the whole movement. Mainly, it is thought that this was done by the composer to alter tone color. However, there is not a single indication that the pedal cannot be changed. It is possible that Beethoven had the sordino (divided damper) in mind that allowed the bass to raise and lower with every new change while keeping a blur on top. In the autograph and the first

⁵⁶ Joseph Banowetz, *Pianist's Guide to Piano Pedaling*, p. 160.

edition, as in the Henle edition, there is an indication of not changing the pedal throughout the movement.

In Schnabel's own edition, he indicates a change of the pedal on every first beat of each measure and, interestingly enough, on the bottom of the page writes that the intentions of the composer must be followed exactly! On a modern instrument, it is better to make partial changes; and pianissimo would make the dissonances more mellow.

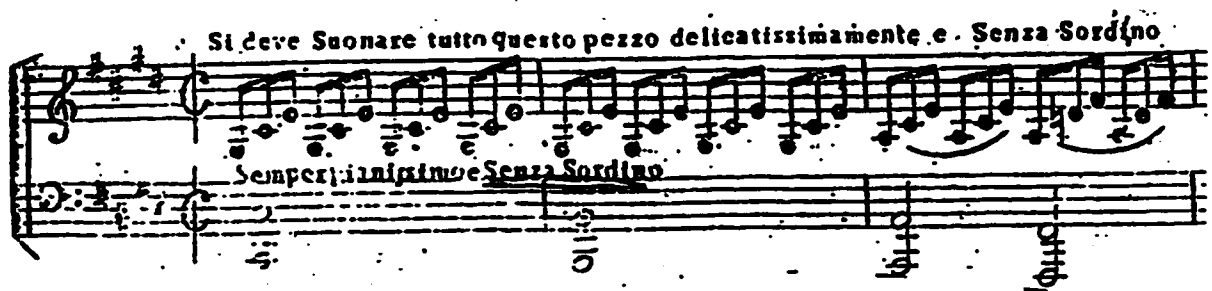


Figure 11. Facsimile of the first edition of "Sonata quasi una Fantasia," Opus 27 No. 2 (mm. 1-3), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁵⁷

Of course, on the modern piano this is almost impossible to do. Schnabel's idea is to change the pedal throughout the piece. Ferguson suggests that before playing, "one silently depresses all the notes on the keyboard below the lowest note in the piece, then catch them with the middle pedal. That means that all the notes from the lowest "E" down will be depressed and held."⁵⁸ Another idea is to lift the pedal slightly, not to clear the pedal entirely.

⁵⁷ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Quasi Una Fantasia* (Vienna: Cappi, 1802), p. 3.

⁵⁸ Howard Ferguson, *Keyboard Interpretation: From the 14th to the 19th Century. An Introduction* (New York & London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 163.

SONATA, Opus 31, no. 2 (Tempest)

Beethoven composed his Opus 28 around 1800 and told his good friend Krumpholtz: "I am not very well satisfied with the work I have thus far done. From this day on I shall take a new way."⁵⁹ Indeed, the composer took a new direction in his compositions that appeared shortly after this conversation: the three sonatas Opus 31. The Sonata Opus 31, no. 2 was completed in late spring of 1802 in Heiligenstadt and was published in April 1803. Both Sonatas Opus 31, no. 1, and 2 are very large works and could be divided into three compositions rather than two. Carl Czerny said of Op. 31, no. 2, "This sonata is perfect. Its tragic character, its artistic form, its romantic and picturesque nature, will never fail to produce the greatest effect, when the fancy of the player is equal to his technical powers."⁶⁰

The introduction is controversial. Generally, the pedal should not be changed and must sing as an Aeolian harp. Beethoven said about the passages in mm. 143-8, 153-8 (recitatives): "I wish it to sound as if someone were speaking in a vault."⁶¹ Possibly, the composer had in mind a split damper pedal.

There is a question about how much the pedal should held. Joseph Banowetz says that in measures 143-48 we must forget about melodic line and listen to it not as a phrase, but as a mystery.⁶² Another possibility is to use the finger *legatissimo* (smooth connection of the tones) or the middle pedal instead of a real pedal. This provides more control over the blurring.

There is no autograph of the Sonata, so my observations are based on the Schnabel

⁵⁹ O.G. Sonneck, *Beethoven: Impressions by His Contemporaries*, p. 31.

⁶⁰ J. Alfred Johnstone, *Notes On the Interpretation of 24 Famous Piano Sonatas by Beethoven* (London: The New Temple Press, n. d.), p. 149.

⁶¹ Wolfram, p. 15.

⁶² Banowetz, p. 178.

and Henle editions. These two editions show entirely different approaches to the music in measures 140-3.

Figure 12. Urtext edition of Piano Sonata, Opus 31 No. 2, “Tempest,” movement 1 (mm. 134-148), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁶³

Figure 13. Schnabel edition of Piano Sonata, Opus 31 No. 2, “Tempest,” movement 1 (mm. 140-148), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁶⁴

⁶³ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten* (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1976), p. 81.

⁶⁴ Ludwig van Beethoven, *32 Sonaty dlia Fortepiano*, Artur Schnabel, ed. (Moskva: Muzika, 1983), Vol. 2, 1983, p. 111.

Schnabel writes the release of the pedal after the second beat of measure 148 and leaves the fermata with the quarter rest in silent wait. However, Henle indicates the release of the pedal on the fourth beat of measure 148 holding the fermata on the pedal. Probably, it is more reasonable to give prolongation of the theme and connect it to the later material. Also, this pattern helps to sustain a unique, blurry sound, as if there is a fog or a mist, or, indeed, a mysterious voice from the tomb.

Sonata, Opus 101

The Sonata Opus 101 was composed in 1816 and was dedicated to Baroness Dorothea Ertmann. A significant fact was that the sonata was composed before Beethoven received the Broadwood. Beethoven's hearing was very poor by that time, and this sonata has a tendency to present a different registration than that used in early sonatas. Beethoven used the top and low registers more than the middle. One of the reasons for this could be that he could hear better in those specific areas. Kolodin proposes another theory by suggesting that the sonatas is "work ... out of habit, or simply to preserve a succession in being ...new example of the same."⁶⁵ However, he points out that the sonatas are musical and have few characteristics of the traditional form. The Sonata Opus 101 is considered by many pianists to be more suitable to be performed for a small audience--or, better yet, in a studio rather than on a big stage. Among those who hold this belief are pianists Myra Hess, Artur Schnabel, and Vladimir Horowitz.

In measure 30 of the second movement, D-flat is marked to be sustained for four measures on the pedal while a difficult passage is played.

⁶⁵ Irving Kolodin, *The Interior Beethoven: A Bibliography of the Music* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), p. 257.

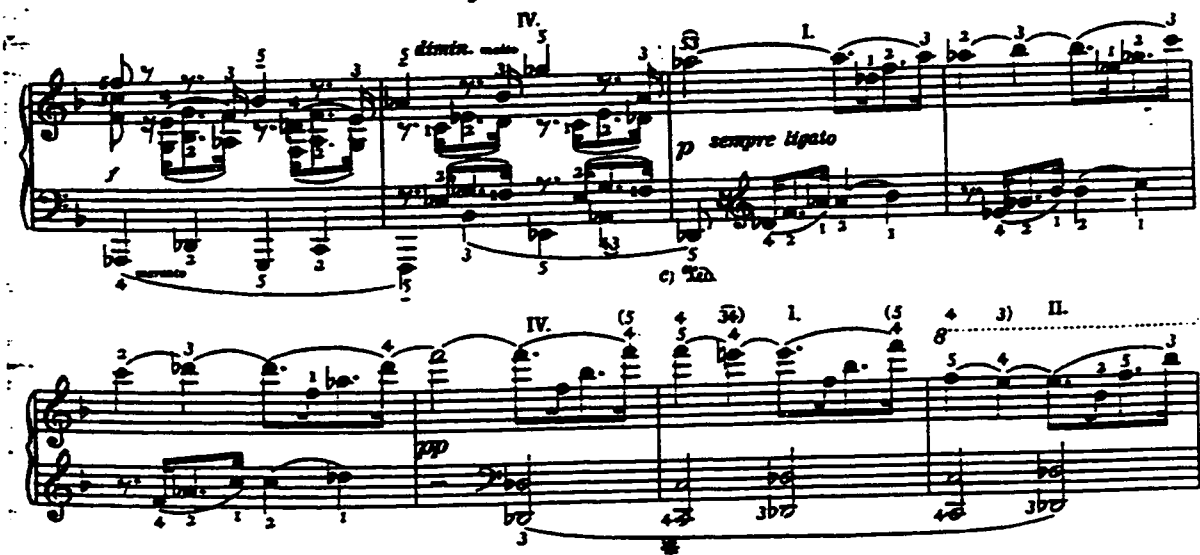


Figure 14. Urtext edition of Piano Sonata, Opus 101, 2nd movement (mm. 28-35), by Ludwig van Beethoven.⁶⁶

Since all tones (except the bass) lie above middle “C,” Beethoven might have been thinking of a split damper pedal. On the modern piano, the *sostenuto* pedal would work nicely, but the impressionistic blur Beethoven wanted would be missing. In addition, to indicate that the passage must be played smoothly and connected, Beethoven wrote *sempre legato* [always connected] in the middle of the staff. This was probably done to inform the performer that, in the passage, *legato* is necessary. *Una corda* marks were written in Italian in the autograph and in German the first edition as *Mit einer Saite*.

The first edition shows a clear indication of the release of the pedal before playing the “C” octave in the bass. Schnabel does it exactly the same and even indicates that the pedal was marked by Beethoven. Surprisingly, the Urtext edition places the release sign “on the C” (first beat of measure 34). If one lifts one’s foot with the chord, it would not be caught by the pedal. But this tiny gap might have been wanted by the composer since there is no slur sign between the last “F” in measure 33 and the first “F” in measure 34.

⁶⁶ Ludwig van Beethoven, *Klaviersonaten* (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1976), p. 253.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In the introduction, I indicated that one of the goals of this paper would be to compare several editions in order to find similarities and/or differences in the piano works of Beethoven. My conclusions are: first, autographs are the most important and essential sources to find out the real intentions of the composer. Second, the Henle edition is the most reliable modern edition. However, it contains some obvious mistakes of the pedal marks in the Third Piano Concerto. Third, the first edition is found to be a most important source; however, it is not available for all piano works. Fourth, Schnabel's edition stays true to the autograph most of the time but includes his own remarks regarding the performance of the pieces presented in this study. Three pianos played an important role in Beethoven's life: the Erard, the Broadwood, and the Graf.

Piano pedals attracted the attention of many composers during the eighteenth century even though they remained in constant development at that time. However, only Beethoven incorporated the pedal as a very important part of his piano writing.

Beethoven's innovation of blurring the sound opened a path to new developments for many composers. Many of Beethoven's contemporaries disagreed with his ideas, and the arguments are still present. Many felt that the long pedals used by the composer were due to his poor health (in particular, his growing deafness). However, this theory is not supported by most historical documents. Rather, the sounds that were created by Beethoven were the outcome of his genius, plus the influences of personal life as well as the development of the instrument that he was using. His innovations with blurring harmonies (e.g. dominant and tonic) created impressionistic, new dimensions of sound for his contemporaries.

Though Beethoven retained many ideas of Classicism, he was also a romantic. He was ahead of his time, and that is why many of his innovations were not understood during his lifetime. However, the music of the present time would not be as powerful and daring as it is if it were not for Ludwig van Beethoven who pioneered new pedal effects on the Fortepiano. All of his works show the composer's masterful use of the pedals, and each with its own unique approach.

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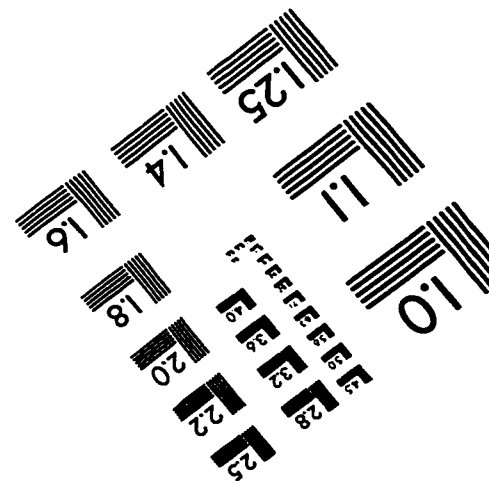
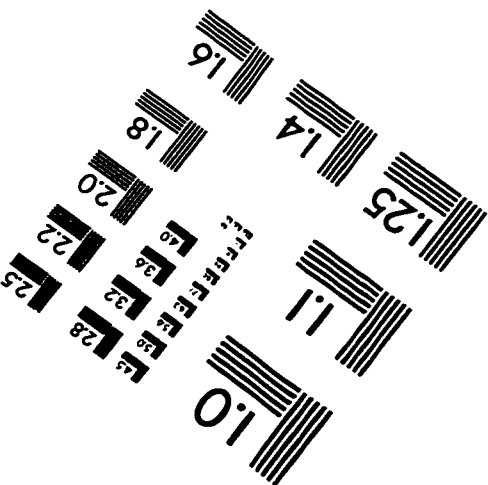
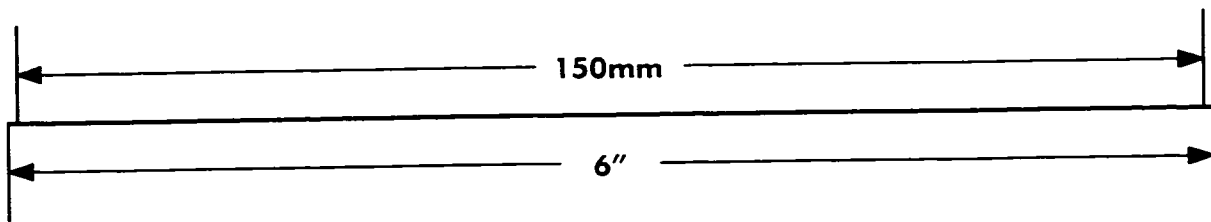
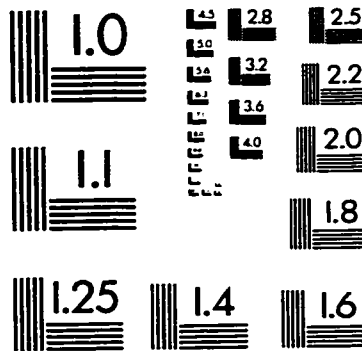
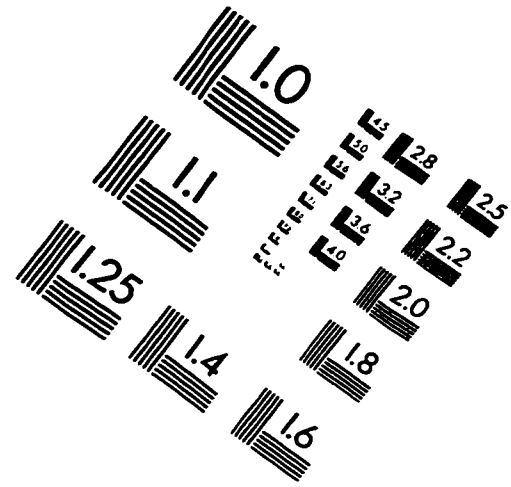
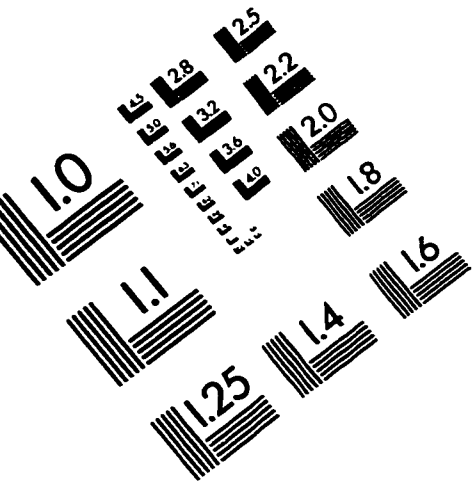
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IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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